Pope Leo receives Palestinian president at Vatican

VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo XIV held his first meeting with Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas on Thursday, where the Vatican said they discussed the "urgent need" to help the civilian population in Gaza.

The visit comes almost a month into a fragile ceasefire between Hamas and Israel, following two years of war triggered by the Palestinian group's October 7, 2023, attack.

Abbas is the longtime head of the Palestinian Authority, which exerts limited control over parts of the West Bank. His Fatah movement is the rival to Hamas, which took control of Gaza in 2007.

Abbas and Leo spoke by telephone in July, but on Thursday, it was their first in-person meeting since the American took over as head of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics in May.

"During the cordial talks, it was recognised that there is an urgent need to provide assistance to the civilian population in Gaza and to end the conflict by pursuing a two-state solution," the Vatican said in a statement afterwards.



POPE Leo XIV meets Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas at the Vatican.—Reuters

It noted that the meeting came 10 years after the Holy See formally recognised the state of Palestine through an agreement signed in 2015.

Abbas met several times with Leo's predecessor, Pope Francis, who died in April.

In the final months of his pontificate, Francis hardened his rhetoric against Israel's assault on Gaza, but his successor has so far adopted a more measured tone.

Leo has expressed his solidarity with Gaza and denounced the forced displacement of Palestinians, but said the Holy See could not describe what was happening as a "genocide".

On Wednesday afternoon, Abbas laid flowers at Francis's tomb at the Rome basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore.

"I cannot forget what he did for Palestine and the Palestinian people," Abbas told reporters.

In 2014, then-Israeli president Shimon Peres and Abbas joined a prayer for peace with Pope Francis at the Vatican, planting an olive tree together.

Abbas, on Friday, will meet with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. —AFP

US has revoked 80,000 visas this year, official says

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration has revoked around 80,000 non-immigrant visas since its inauguration on Jan 20 for offences ranging from driving under the influence to assault and theft, a State Department official said on Wednesday.

The extent of the revocations reflects a broad immigration crackdown initiated when Trump came to office, deporting an unprecedented number of migrants, including some who held valid visas.

The administration has also adopted a stricter policy on granting visas, with tightened social media vetting and expanded screening.

Around 16,000 of the visa revocations were tied to cases of driving under the influence, while about 12,000 were for assault and another 8,000 for theft.

"These three crimes accounted for almost half of the revocations this year," said the State Department official.

In August, a State Department spokesperson said Washington had revoked more than 6,000 student visas for overstays and breaking the law, including a small number for "support for terrorism".

The department also said last month that it had revoked the visas of six people over social media comments about the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in May he has revoked the visas of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people, including students, because of involvement in activities that he said went against US foreign policy priorities.

Directives from the State Department this year have ordered US diplomats abroad to be vigilant against any applicants whom Washington may see as hostile to the United States and with a history of political activism.

Trump administration officials have said that student visa and green card holders are subject to deportation over their support for Palestinians and criticism of Israel's conduct in the Gaza conflict.—Reuters

Israel launches air strikes on south Lebanon

BEIRUT: The Israeli military carried out heavy airstrikes on southern Lebanon on Thursday after issuing evacuation orders for several locations, saying Lebanese armed group Hezbollah was trying to rebuild its military capabilities there.

The orders and strikes came despite a ceasefire deal agreed a year ago that was meant to end more than a year of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, and after months of Lebanese army efforts to clear Hezbollah sites in the south.

Giving a preliminary toll, the Lebanese health ministry said that one person was wounded in the afternoon bombing after one person was killed in strikes earlier in the day.

Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee issued three simultaneous evacuation orders on X at 3pm local time on Thursday, with maps showing buildings in the villages of Aita al-Jabal, Al-Tayyiba and Tayr Debba. Two more orders came later for other towns in the south.

The locations ranged from just 4 km away from the Israeli border to nearly 24 km north of the frontier. The posts ordered residents to keep a 500-metre distance from the identified locations.

The airstrikes began about an hour after the orders, sending thick plumes of smoke into the sky. Fears have been mounting in Lebanon that Israel could resume an aerial bombing campaign, particularly after Israeli leaders warned they would take action against Hezbollah if Lebanon did not step up efforts to disarm the group.—Reuters

Kazakhstan to join Abraham Accords

WASHINGTON: Kazakhstan is expected to announce it is joining the Abraham Accords under which a number of Muslim nations have normalised relations with Israel, a US official said on Thursday.

According to the official, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev will inform President Donald Trump about his decision at a meeting at the White House, to be attended by four other Central Asian leaders. The development comes as Washington seeks to gain influence in a region long dominated by Russia and increasingly courted by China.

Kazakhstan already has full diplomatic relations and economic ties with Israel, meaning the move would be largely symbolic.

US special envoy Steve Witkoff said earlier at a business forum in Florida that he would be returning to Washington for the announcement, without naming the country.

A source familiar with the matter said the US hope is that Kazakhstan's entry will help reinvigorate the Abraham Accords, the expansion of which had been on hold during the Gaza conflict.

Trump has repeatedly said he wants to expand the accords that he brokered during his first term in the White House.

The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain established ties with Israel in 2020 under the Trump-brokered Abraham Accords. Morocco established ties with Israel later the same year.

Trump has been upbeat about the prospects that Saudi Arabia will finally join the accords since a ceasefire went into effect in Gaza last month, but Riyadh has shown no willingness to move ahead without at least a pathway to Palestinian statehood.—Reuters

Govt agrees to attend PTI's peace jirga in KP

Continued from Page 1

led also met with National Awami Party Chairman Aftab Sherpao on Thursday.

"The delegation invited Aftab Ahmad Sherpao to attend the peace jirga organised by the KP provincial government on Nov 12," he wrote.

In another post, Mr Qaiser wrote that Mr Sherpao was an "important leader of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and has also served as [its] chief minister".

He added, "We desire that he inform the provincial government of his views and experiences. Peace and security are our common issues, which transcend politics."

ANP to hold 'consultations'

Awami National Party (ANP) KP President Mian Iftikhar Hussain said that he would hold consultations and then inform the PTI as well as the media about accepting the invitation to the peace jirga.

He made these remarks at a joint press conference in Peshawar on Thursday flanked by PTI leader and adviser to the KP chief minister, Shafiullah Jan.

"The jirga we held was successful and we formed an organising committee with all political parties. To look after it, we implemented a procedure," he said in response to a question.

"When we called an all-parties conference, we made a decision, and the ANP called another conference in Islamabad," he added. "After the floods, we decided to suspend that decision under the situation improved."

Mr Hussain said that there had been no contact with some parties, adding that ANP President Aimal Wali Khan told KP CM Sohail Afridi that the party would only make a decision after consultations.

"We are grateful for their [the PTI] invitation and we will reply once we have had consultations," he stated. "You will find out who is going [to the jirga]."

Speaking at the press conference, PTI KP Secretary General Ali Asghar Khan said that the previous jirga was called by the chief minister, and his party had reservations about being part of a jirga with the federal government.

"This time, the jirga has been called by the [KP] speaker," he stated. "He [KP speaker] formed a committee and will hold meetings with parliamentarians from all parties. He has done so because we, as a party, have come to extend the speaker's invitation and to ask that you [ANP] respond positively."



THIS SUNDAY'S HIGHLIGHTS:

EOS

PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY. CULTURE. IDEAS.

COVER: CAN THE TLP BE BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL?
The Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) is once again facing a ban after being accused of being involved in terrorism. Five years after the death of its founder Khadim Hussain Rizvi, his party remains one of the country's most disruptive political forces. But the TLP's story is not just about weaponisation of religion – it's about class, power and a state caught between crackdown and appeasement. **Zia Ur Rehman** reports...

SOCIETY: A WOMAN ON THE VERGE
Naushaba Roonjho has had a transformational impact on her conservative village in Sindh, becoming its first woman to pass matriculation, a community health leader and an education crusader. Now, she intends to contest local body elections...

WILDLIFE: THE FADING BIRDS OF PAKISTAN
Pakistan's ecological crisis is not just due to habitat loss, but also because of the loss of cultural memory...

BOOKS&AUTHORS: Tariq Rahman's *Not the Whole Truth: My Life and Times*, Honore de Balzac's *Aik Tees Saala Aurat* translated by Inaam Nadeem, and Rauf Parekh on Allama Iqbal's Real Date of Birth; ALSO: Musharraf Ali Farooqi on Introspection

PLUS: Nadeem F. Paracha on the Maritime Mindset, Durriya Kazi on Signs and Miracles, Mamdani's Win and Trump's First Setback, One Hundred Years of Sumo, Nazia Ejaz's 'Borderlands', Shazia Hasan on the Parsi Mawa Cake, Dr Khwaja Ali Shahid's Gardening, Auntie Agni and Static Cling

ICON

INSIGHT INTO ENTERTAINMENT. PERFORMING ARTS. STYLE. CELEBRITY.

FESTIVAL: THE 2ND WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL
The Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi is once again making Karachi the world's stage – showcasing music, theatre, dance, films, artworks, talks and workshops. With more than 1,000 foreign participants and stretching over 39 days, the event is truly unmatched in scale and ambition...

ESSAY: THE ERASURE OF A CINEMATIC HERITAGE
Many of Indian Hindi cinema's most iconic stars were born in cities and towns that are now part of Pakistan. The attempt to erase this shared heritage is a wound to a shared cultural heartbeat

PLUS: Reviews of Kathryn Bigelow's *House of Dynamite* and Yorgos Lanthimos' *Bugonia*, The BBC Documentary *Girlbands Forever*, The Grapevine, The Tube and Spotify's Top Pakistani Music

DAWN

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CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Company Overview: Our Client, a Karachi based company seeks to appoint experienced professional for the following position:

SENIOR MANAGEMENT POSITION – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (Battery Energy Storage System)

Job Role

The position is responsible for leading the commercial strategy and growth of the company's battery energy storage portfolio. This role focuses on identifying new markets, securing strategic partnerships, and closing high-impact deals. It requires a deep understanding of energy storage technologies, regulatory landscapes, and customer needs. The position plays a key role in shaping the company's presence in the evolving clean energy sector.

Key Responsibilities:

Strategic Planning
- Design and execute business development strategies to meet organizational objectives, including revenue growth and market penetration in the BESS sector
- Analyze market trends, policy developments, and competitive dynamics to shape strategic direction

Commercial Development
- Identify and pursue high-impact opportunities across utility-scale, C&I, and grid service markets
- Build and maintain a strong pipeline through proactive client engagement, competitive bidding, and strategic alliances
- Drive the development of compelling proposals, pricing structures, and contract negotiations to secure new business

Partnership and Market Expansion
- Forge and manage strategic partnerships with IPPs, utilities, developers, EPCs, OEMs, and technology providers
- Represent the organization at key industry events and forums to elevate brand visibility and commercial influence

Project Management
- Manage full project lifecycles from development through delivery, ensuring alignment with technical and commercial expectations
- Ensure the successful execution of BESS projects, overseeing timelines, budgets, and quality benchmarks

Team Development and Leadership
- Lead and mentor a team of business development and sales professionals
- Drive a performance-oriented culture with clear KPIs and development plans

Compliance
- Maintain full regulatory compliance and adherence to industry standards across all business development and delivery functions

Education:
- Minimum 16 years of education preferably masters from a renowned HEC recognized university or institution/equivalent foreign degree holder preferably in Business Administration, Engineering, Marketing or a related field.

Experience:
- Minimum 8-10 years of professional experience preferably in a large national/multinational organization with at least 5-7 years of related functional experience in a similar role at an equivalent position.

Requirements:
- Strong understanding of BESS technologies (e.g., lithium-ion, flow batteries), system integration, and market applications (e.g., frequency regulation, demand shifting)
- Proven track record of closing deals in energy storage or related sectors
- Excellent negotiation, communication, and interpersonal skills

Age
- The candidate should preferably be not more than 45 years of age as of last date of submission of application.

If you have the required experience and educational qualification to take up the challenging role, you are requested to apply by **November 21, 2025** at **http://jobs.hrs-int.com/**

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

www.hrs-int.com

hrsi

STDC Sindh Transmission & Dispatch Company (Pvt.) Limited

Sindh Transmission & Dispatch Company (Pvt.) Limited (STDC)

HIRING OF SERVICES - MANPOWER

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sindh Transmission & Dispatch Company (Pvt.) Limited (STDC) is registered with Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) under Companies Act 2017 (previously Companies Ordinance 1984), wholly owned by Government of Sindh and an ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and ISO 27001 certified company, engaged in the business of provision of catering the need of extra high voltage electric power infrastructure.

Sealed Bids as per SPPRA Rules 2010 (Amended from time to time) are hereby invited from interested firms to be engaged in the supply of manpower for carrying out the Operations & Maintenance of Extra High Tension (EHT) Transmission Lines in the Jurisdiction of Sindh.

List of Manpower

S.No	Description	Number of Each Cadre
	OFFICER CADRE	
1.	Manager Administration	01
2.	Inventory Control Officer	01
3.	Finance Officer	01
4.	Site Engineer	02
5.	Safety Engineer	01
	NON-OFFICER CADRE	
6.	Foreman	02
7.	Supervisor	02
8.	High Skilled Lineman	16
9.	Helper	06
10.	Welder	02
11.	Store Keeper	02
12.	Security Guard	04

2. Eligibility: Valid Registration with relevant Provincial and Federal Tax authorities (SRB & FBR).Other details are written in the Bidding Document. Must be on Active Tax Payer List (ATL)

3. Method of Procurement. ***Single Stage Two Envelope.***

4. Bidding/Tender Documents:

(i)Issuance Bidding Document can be downloaded via SPPRA EPAD PORTAL from date of publication to November 25, 2025, on payment of tender fee of Rs. 10,000/- (Non- refundable). The tender fee shall be submitted in the form of pay Order/demand draft in favor of "Sindh Transmission & Dispatch Company (Pvt.) Limited".

(ii) **Submission:** Last date will be **November 25, 2025 till 11:00 am.**

(iii) **Opening:** will be opened on **November 25, 2025 at 11:30am.**

(iv) **Place** of issuance, submission, inquiries and opening will be:-

(v) Address (Postal) : SPPRA EPAD PORTAL

(vi) Telephone Number(s) :021-111-777-832 / 021-99204676/ 021-99204672

5. Terms & Conditions.

(a) Time for Completion: One year from the date of Signing of the Contract Agreement. (Further extendable annually up to 4 years on satisfactory performance and mutual consent)

(b) Amount of Bid Security: 2 % of Estimated value of Procuring Agency.

(c) Under following conditions bid will be rejected:-

(i) Conditional and telegraphic bids/tenders;

(ii) Bids not accompanied by bid security of required amount and form;

(iii) Bids received after specified date and time.

(iv) Black listed firms.

(d)Bid validity Period: - (90) days.

(e)Procuring Agency reserves the right to reject all or any bids subject to the relevant provisions of Sindh Public Procurement Rules 2010, amended from time to time.

(f)Responsive Bidder is required to submit following documents with bid:

(i) List of similar assignments over the past 3 years;

(ii) Completion certificates of satisfactory performance;

(iii) Financial Statement (summary) and income tax return for the last 3 years;

(iv) Affidavit that firm has never been black listed;

Chairman - Procurement Committee
Sindh Transmission & Dispatch Company (Pvt.) Limited